

RE-POSITIONING ART MANAGEMENT: A BASE FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the importance of the Art manager to the socio-economic development of the Visual Arts Practices in Nigeria. In the cause of this, the paper looks at Art, Re-Positioning Management and Administration, Social and Economic problems, History of Art Management in Nigeria and Overseas, Traditional Art Administration in Nigeria, Art Management in Europe and America problems in visual Art Education, Socio economic development and recommended that for the Visual Art to receive a boost in Nigeria like football, Art managers/Administrators should be massively trained in our Higher Institutions at all levels. This will bring awareness and regard to Visual Art Practice as they function to manage Arts, for better Socio-economic development in Nigeria.

Introduction

Through the ages, the Art Management had been practiced in line with religious and utilitarian services quite different from the modernized system of institutional management that now enhance the production and exhibition of Art for its economic and social viability in Nigeria. The concept of management as applied to Art, enhances socio-economic development of the visual Art. It is therefore, necessary to define the concepts that make up the topic. Repositioning is a redirection of Art Management in the context of administration.

Management refer to a set of activities which can be classified as concerned with planning organizing or controlling (Gibson, 1976). It is the job of getting things done through people. This definition suggests that management is a process that is, a sequence of coordinated events (Peretomode, 1992).

Sherleka, (1984), defined management as the guidance, leadership and control of the efforts of group of people towards some common objectives. It is a social or interactional and economic process involving a sequence of coordinated events, planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling or leading, in order to use available resources to achieve a desired outcome in the fastest and most efficient way. Management can also be viewed as the process undertaken by one or more individuals to co-ordinate the activities of others to achieve results not achievable by one individual (Donnelly Jr, James H, Gibson James and Invancevish, John M. 1984).

Management and administration are complementary activities. Yet there are differences. Administration has a plethora of definitions. Miewald, (1978), defined administration as, "the means by which formal goals are achieved through human effort". It is the capacity to co-ordinate many and often conflicting social energies in a single organization so arduously that they shall operate as a unity (Adams, 1913). Nwankwo, (1987) viewed administration as the careful and systematic arrangements and use of resources (human and material), situations and opportunities for the achievement of the specific objectives of a given organization. Breach (1985), defined administration as that part of management that is concerned with the installation and carrying out of the procedures by which programmes, plans and targets are laid down and communicated and the progress of activities are regulated and checked against them. Administration specifically, refers to the performance of specific duties, carrying out of policies or decisions to fulfill a purpose, and the controlling of the day to day running of the organization.

One difference that should be noted between management and administration is that managers are those who plan and formulate policies and programmes, while administrators are those who carry out or implement those policies and programmes as soon as, and after they are formulated.

In line with the title of the topic, this paper shall define what is Art. Art has many definitions as you have artists. But (he most embracing definition is that Art is anything produced for its appeal to the aesthetic sensibility. In this context, Art is not a vacuum. It is a substance that has volume and can be seen and evaluated. Art management therefore, is the planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling of Art materials through human and material resources for some specific purpose especially for production, preservation and exhibitions. The Art manager is therefore, essentially, a planner and formulator of policies and programmes for art and artists for a specific purpose of producing, collecting, exhibiting and preserving the works of art and artists. What is therefore socio-economic development? Socio-economic development can be viewed from the social status of the environment where Art operates. Economy has something to do with monetary value of the

Art works by the people, while development is the progressive improvement of the facilities available to the people.

Nigeria has witnessed financial and Socio-economic hardship as a result of their adherence to the orthodox developmental strategies. This was compounded by the infusion of foreign capital in an effort to purchase, at times unsuitable and sophisticated technology in pursuit of technology transfer. The aim, of course is to improve the standard of living of the people in comparison with those obtainable in the western society. When the Government of Nigeria in its effort to correct the obnoxious and ill - advised Socio-economic development policies based on the importation of advanced technology in a culture that is very different or at variance with that of the West, Structural adjustment programs, (SAP), Foreign Exchange Market (FEM) and social mobilization among others were set up. This resulted into backward and negative development.

Nigeria is expected to be self-sufficient by the exploitation of indigenous technology which anthropologists refer to as using both the potential and behavioural profiles of culture as a base for development. This is where Art Managers make contribution to the production, organization, promotion, preservation, revival and resurgence of our Art values and civilization. The main concern of this paper therefore, is to highlight the position of the Art manager to the extent to which its effort could be utilized in the socio-economic development in Nigeria.

The greatest contributor to art development in Nigeria has been the Federal Government. Since independence in 1960; plenty of resources have been committed to the setting up of the National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC) and National Gallery of Art (NGA). These institutions complemented by foreign cultural centres, have played significant roles in our Visual Arts development. These are several centres promoting art and in particular the works of the Nigeria artists, for example French Cultural Centre, Goethe Institute, Italian Cultural Institute, Russian Cultural centre, private Galleries as well as national and multinational corporations operating in Nigeria.

History of Art Management in Nigeria

The history of Modern Art management in Nigeria could be traced back to 1927, when FCennet Murray, who was an Art teacher in the Education Department of British colonial office, made the first notable attempt to collect and preserve Nigeria works of Art. E.H. Duckworth, of the Education Development in 1933, started to publicize and stress the need to preserve these art works. Nigeria Antiquities services was inaugurated 28th July 1943. This brought Mr. Murray who was seconded to public relations office to the forefront to undertake a survey of Nigeria antiquities and make recommendations aimed at preserving them. In 1946, J. H. Braunholtz, who was the keeper of the British Department of Ethnography, British Museum, was sent to Nigeria to advise the Government on how to preserve Nigerian antiquities (Okpoko, 1986). These developments culminated in the creation of National Antiquities Department in 1953, by the Antiquities Ordinance, No. 17. Under the ordinance, the Federal Department of Antiquities was charged with the responsibility to discover, preserve and study the material culture of the diverse peoples of Nigeria, past and present (Nigeria Year Book. 1983). Other Museums were subsequently established at Enugu, Ibadan, Sokoto, Aba, Umuahia and Maiduguri. Today^ the National Commission for Museums and Monuments which was established by Decree No.77, of 1979 has established Museums in many needy areas (Okpoko, 1992). It is of interest to note that all the new states created in 1991, in Nigeria have established museums in their state capital especially in Asaba.

Other institutions established to manage our Art and cultural resources, material or non-material include:

- a. Centre for black mid African Arts Civilization
- b. Nigerian Tourist Board
- c. Nigerian Film censorship Board
- d. Nigerian Film Corporation
- e. National Theatre (incorporating the National troupe of Nigeria).
- f. National copyright Council.

The above institutions have their individual places in the management of our cultural realities. The National commission for Museum and Monuments is the largest single cultural institution in the country, housing diverse relics that cut across cultural boundaries

which it presents to various categories of visitors.

Apart from these institutionalized Art Administration recorded, the traditional Art administration had been. One questions, how the traditional administration was carried out.

Traditional Art Administration in Nigeria

Ever before the arrival of the Portuguese, Nigeria had their administrative method for Art and culture. For the purpose of this paper. Art management and Art administration shall be used interchangeably to mean the production collection, preservation and exhibition of our Art and cultural heritage. As spirit - regarding Art, there are many figures connected with special cults, such as those of Eshu or Legba of the Ewe and Yoruba, on the twin cults of the same tribe. Again there are the personal protectors of the master of the house, such as the Ikenga figures of the Ibo. Then come the guardians of (the village or of the house, represented by figures placed at the door and facing outwards: these are not considered as dwelling places of the spirits, but merely as receptacles to absorb and draw away evil. It is possible that many undifferentiated little figures belong to this category. Few of them are of great artistic merit. The Yorubas have the Egungun and Gelede festivals where facial wood mask are worn. Epa festival at Omu in the south-east of Ilorin province, Nigeria use mask of Janus-faced that is shaped like an inverted cooking pot. In Ife, the royal palace housed a collection of bronze and terra cotta heads. The royal Art of Benin housed bronze heads. The royal Art of Benin housed bronze figures similar to the bronze figures of Ife while the carvings were of the artistic court crafts men. There was the queen mother heads wearing a horn like headdress and some powerful heads of marked pragmatism. The large bronzes of human and animal figures formed at Jebba and Tada on the Middle Niger, Igbo-Ukwu Art near Awka is believed to be of tribal crafts men. Built up figure groups are found among the Ijaws and Ibos. Carved crocodile paddles are used during ceremonies. Sakapu secret society display headdresses representing the own or water spirit. Obukele is the Ibo cult for the water spirits. The Ijaws wear masks in a horizontal form of animal and human forms combination. The explanation that the Yoruba, Ibo and Ijaw marks are portraits of spirits as seen floating in the water, and the suggestive resemblance in some to the form of hippopotamus and in others to a crocodile, looks interesting Human figures, birds figures and fish figures also characterize the Ijaw, Ibo masks which are worn on ceremonial occasions. The Ekpo Njawhaw society of the Ibo and Ibibio is quoted to be more of unpleasant secret society in Eastern Nigeria. Masks are made by the Anang for Ekpo society, identified as Ekong mask that are made up of skulls, snakes and bared teeth is of heavy coarse brutality and described as tremendously strong and convey a great sense of evil. A brief mention should be made of the masks of the Igojji society or Iko Okochi of Afikpo, the Elu marks of the Ogoni tribe and many others used during funerals and other ceremonies and at festivals such as Christmas, when the members accompany the masked figure usually two, from house to house. The headdresses are impressive to enhance the prestige of the society.

Large statues are usually the common possession of a village, a family or society. These are kept and cared for by a priest, and brought out and worshipped only for important ceremonies, which are for (the common good. Smaller figures may belong to individuals as personal protective spirits. They are given an honoured place in the house and recharge with psychic force at periodic cultic celebration. Among the fetishes are occasionally found some with the features of the sacred tribal ancestors or a powerful and dynamic political leader and these can be counted as work of art. (Leuzinger, 1972). These were the administrative style to preserve, exhibit or market the Art products. The master carvers and Art producers were given high regard in the tribal society in which they live.

In African Art Administration, there are notable writers like Frank Willet, Dele Jegede who mentioned guilds of craftsmen. From all indications, our classical art starting from Nok traditions, Igbo - Ukwu, Ife and Benin were produced through various forms of organizational structures. These structures still exist in Benin till date, where the Igun bronze casters are still practicing. Festivals in Osogbo in Osun State, the Egungun fishing festival in Kebbi State, the Igue festival in Benin, the Okere Juju and Agbassa Juju festival in Warri, and others predates the colonial period. These festivals were usually well organized with efficient system of management processes. These could also be organised as tourist centres to attract foreign currencies and interest.

The colonial masters caused a lot of harm to our present day visual arts, which has been the spill over of our general attitude towards visual arts in Nigeria. Our art was essentially tied to our traditional religious institutions, which the colonial governments disregarded. Top-most government

officers now refused to recognise and organise our visual arts due to the biases. In order to correct this ill, Aina Onabolu, the father of modern Art in Nigeria, single handedly introduced art into the Nigeria, school curriculum.

The decree setting up the council outlined the council's function to be.

1. To promote and foster the appreciation, revival and development of Nigeria arts and culture.
2. To plan and co-ordinate cultural activities in Nigeria and foster the development of literary, visual, and the performing arts in Nigeria.
3. To assist (the antiquities commission in the creation, acquisition and preservation of artistic works, cultural monuments and depositories.
4. To organize and promote exhibition.

The council is also empowered to establish with the approval of the minister, cultural centres, theatres, art galleries and craft centres for the promotion of art.

A number of private galleries, like Jiraji, Geothe and Sinsimelia galleries were opened to the public. These were followed by Arts and objects, something special, treasure house, Didi Museum and a host of others. They exhibited and sold art works (EKPO 2002)

But recently the Bruce Onobrakpoko Foundation (BOF) at Agbarha-Otor has started training of indigenous Artist since 1998, in the centre that was started in 1989. This is a welcome development.

Art Management in Europe and America

Training in Art Administration appears to be the missing link or tool that is needed in the development of visual Arts practice in Nigeria (Ekpo, 2002). He contended that the art administrator is that person who occupies a management position in an organization whose main purpose or function is the promotion, and development of Art practice. He looks at the art administrator as a facilitator of arts experience who is in a position to translate art practices into a viable industry, hence he called the art administrator, Art manager. Ekpo called for institutional development as essential to the growth of the arts section in Nigeria.

Art administration or Art management evolved out of the need to preserve, protect, produce and project the arts. This is the practice of Art itself. Art management had been in practice since the period of the Stone Age when hunters scribbled and painted in caves.

In Europe records show the existence of Art activities which gave us the ideas of how art in- ancient antiquity was carried on in the Greco-Roman period, where priests managed cultural performances and other religious rites. The large volume of art works left behind by the Greeks and Romans known as European classical traditions, show a strong organizational foundation as most of the sculptures, pottery and designs were usually incorporated into ceremonies and festivals. This was a form of art administration. Festivals in Greek cities were well planned and supervised while the; Romans sponsored state Art festivals.

During the middle ages churches commissioned artist to embellish illustrations on church walls while in the renaissance period Leonardo Da Vinci and Michelangelo Buonarrotti, had a perfected system of administration that was enhanced by the papacy, because most works produced were commissioned to challenge the artist at that time. This led to the discovery of perspective and Colour harmony with accuracy in human form drawing. Early, as 1767, there was an establishment of state theatre and foundations for development of subsidized arts institutions. England was not left out of their performing arts community to enhance the education Act of 1870, and the local Government Act of 1888, that promoted the growth of museums and performing arts activities throughout Britain.

In the late 19th century, the United State of America recorded serious Art Administration led by private philanthropic organizations. These were metropolitan Museums of model Art, 1929 J. D. Rockefeller Jr, Museums of primitive Art, 1957 and a gift from Rockefeller to the city of New York in 1930.

In United State of America, there was a growth in arts organizations, which needed the attention of art managers.

Functions of the Art Administrator (Manager)

The purpose of the Art manager therefore, is to plan, organize direct, delegate, co-ordinate, budget and implement and evaluate. It is therefore, important to elaborate on the functions of the art manager.

Plans are no plans except they are implemented and appropriate evaluation techniques carried out to ascertain the authenticity of the plans. This is why the planner must have specific training in the area of arts as a specialization in promotion. New trends in the visual arena must be studied. The interest of the audience must be studied and taken into consideration. Planner must determine source of funding and the best venue and target audience for proper planning execution.

Organization is an integral part of art. It goes with the plan. The ability of an administrator to put all human and material resources together to achieve the goal and objective of the plan becomes important.

After drawing up the plan, human and material resources will be well organized for the , execution of the plans. This needs directing subordinates since all the jobs cannot be done by one man alone. This is to ensure that duties and responsibilities are distributed among staff with the authority to carry out such responsibilities.

Plans must be controlled so that they do not derail from the original plans; since the plans are expected to meet up certain financial standard. This is to ensure that the goals and objective of production are not compromised. Controlling also ensures financial accountability since all amount spent must be accounted for as to win the interest of the investors or sponsors. Now government organizations expect administrators or managers to give a report at the end of every project because no investor or sponsor wants to lose.

Delegation of duty is essential since the accomplishment of work cannot be done by the manager alone effectively, managers should not assume that if they do not do it personally, the work cannot be done properly. This requires the supervisory activity of a manager to reduce the time it takes to accomplish a job.

Co-ordination is a process of bringing together fragmentary units of activities of the organization in other to achieve a common goal.

Budgeting is an important part of the Art management, because it is the form of fiscal planning, accounting and control. Every stakeholder of the art process would want to know what has been spent so far and what the surplus would be. This gives investors or the financiers encouragement to further invest in Art activities.

The job of an Art manager is to implement plans for the direct execution of the exhibit. Implementation is an important integral part of the management process. Plans implemented may be followed doggedly or the whole process of the plan may be evaluated and structured for better implementation as problems are identified. This requires a sound cognitive attention of the manager.

The ethical practice of the Art manager stipulated that the manager stirs the middle tied to protect both the art and artist and the consumer of art product and sponsors. This in the real sense is the business man ethics. Since the function of the Art manager has been enumerated, what are the problems of Art management in Nigeria.

Problems in Visual Art Education:

Some of the problems in Visual Arts Education are:

1. Lack of a defined research base.
2. Art management as a missing link in Visual Arts.
3. Lack of production of high-level manpower.

The condition of basic research in Arts Education suggests several sensitive issues regarding the status, methods, and direction of Visual Arts inquiry (Rex, 1981). General comments focus on qualitative and quantitative aspects of research problems, methods, facilities and politics with the intention to highlight the areas of weakness of approach, attitudinal problems and counter-productive issues.

First, one would assume that basic research makes for better art understanding without having any particular direction in mind. Basic research causes invention while understanding of research and technology respond to the need of mankind.

Secondly, when research questions are directly related to the cogency of the questions asked, there is potential value because research is always associated with a question or problem

motivated by intellectual or practical reasons which might lead to pure or basic research and lastly to applied research.

Though these research methods are mutually exclusive, yet in actual practice, research on practical problems may lead to basic principles and intellectually motivated research may yield knowledge that has immediate practical purpose- There *is* lack of graduate students and teachers research to examine the knowledge lag about art teaching, methods, contents and values. Not enough organized for a to discuss visual arts problems and research information while research findings cannot get to the end users in the classroom.

There is absence of art management courses in our institutions of higher learning. It was just of recent that university of Calabar started to offer Art Administration at the masters, degree level in this country.

The problem of Visual Art in Nigeria lies in the attitude of visual art Educators themselves in this country. This brings out the question who is an Art Educator (Art teacher). Teaching is like a plan. Until a plan is executed and products of plans evaluated for a successful job, it is not a plan at all. What this means is that you cannot prove to be an Art Educator until you have successfully put out your raw material -students as refined individual into the job market. This writer had observed with dismay that some colleges have refused to properly instruct students with a view to graduating them. Candidates are either massively delayed for upward of five years for a 2-years course while others who are frustrated abandon the course. This has been the bane of the low turnout of the high level manpower in the visual Arts. The latin words says "Volent non fit injuris". You cannot put your back down for somebody to beat and you still complain because that which a man consents cannot be considered an injury.

The question is, if you are a professor or a doctor, how many doctors have you put on the stream. If you teach masters courses how many of these have you produced. Those you graduate are your wind embrasers that will shade the course of Art in times of criticism, disregard and nonrecognition.

The other cogent reason that scare most candidates from offering the Visual arts is because of the dead end programmes terminating in MFA. Such studies, after the MFA programme, have to meander through MA Art History, Art Education or as at now Art Administration before getting their doctorate degrees. This has slowed down the pace at which high level manpower in the Visual Art are produced in this country. The worst of all is that Art Educators who have climbed high in the educational ladder do not deem it fit to produce counterparts in their universities. This acrimony has contributed to issues of few production of professors in our universities in Nigeria. The more qualified high level personnel in any Art school, the more recognized the Art school in a university.

It is however, absurd as a teacher (Art Educator) to teach students and all the students failed, one would therefore, question your communication link and method of instruction.

This paper therefore advocates that a tree cannot make a forest. The Visual Arts need enough manpower, a liberal education base that will massively mount a front to champion the course, promotion and propagation of Visual Art Educators and especially Art managers in this country. In comparison to physical and health Education, physical and Health Educator massively produce high level manpower to champion the course of physical and health Education and as at today their projection has enable them to be seen and heard at all sectors of the Nigeria Economy.

This write up is in no way abrogating standard for mediocrity but a way to bring to the forefront the visual arts in Nigeria.

Socio Economic Development in Visual Art Education

Ekpo (2002), stated, "that Art administrators (Art managers) major function is to plan and execute projects. A trained Art administrator is therefore, beneficial to artists and arts organizations because his training puts him in a better position to effectively organize art activities. He is trained to think strategically. He is trained to anticipate problems as well as provide solutions to specific artistic needs. Based on knowledge on the field the administrators responsibility includes identifying needs, determining goals and objectives as well as sourcing funds for specific projects and programmes he is meant to administer". As long as this paper agrees with Ekpo's statement, there must be an addition of the Art managers ability to organize production to enhance art practices in Nigeria. This being so, the

focus of the Art manager is therefore, to enhance the Socio-economic development of Artists and visual Arts practices in Nigeria, for example, many art practices that were not known to the people will be brought to the fore. Galleries and Art theatres will be built to encourage tourism and art connoisseurs. This will open more avenues for discoveries that will be beneficial to immediate users of products of art. Utilitarian art works will flourish to ease the problems of the people. For example indigenous kin designed and constructed will not only be useful to clay firing but for baking of bread and other useful food items

Recommendations

There is the need to strengthen the work of the Art manager in the visual Art practice in Nigeria. This is why Ekpo, (2002), recommended that, Art administration be considered seriously as a course of study in our tertiary institutions, either as an introductory course at the undergraduate level or as seminar course at the most graduate level. He further said the knowledge would be of immense value to any student of art. While I agree with Ekpo in this regard, I wish to add that art administration should be an integral part of art practices in Nigeria. In this wise fragmentary knowledge should be made wholistic by making it a course of study at the 1st, 2nd and 3rd degree levels of our educational system as being done in foreign countries. One main reason why art has not be promoted for the interest of the large population awareness is that we have not enough professional Art managers/administrators to champion the course of art like football. Therefore, the more Art managers we have in this country the better promotion and regards to art and artists. Art management should be taught in colleges of Education and other institutions that offer art as well as the entrepreneurial skill acquisition. The universities that offer theatre management to the 3rd level of our educational system, i.e Doctorate level should structure a curriculum in line for Art administrators or managers. However, Artists with masters in Educational Administration and the like have some relevance to Art Administration.

Conclusion

The socio-economic sector of our Art practices will not have a boost if Art managers population are not strengthened by grooming more of them in our higher institutions to champion the course of Art practices and promotion to the awareness of the Nigeria audience. This is a heinous task that must be accomplished. Nigeria witnessed financial and socio-economic hardship as a result of their adherence to the authodox development strategies. *This* was compounded by the infusion of foreign capital .in an effort to purchase, at times, unsuitable and sophisticated technology in pursuit of technology transfer. The aim was to improve the standard of living of the people in comparison with that of the western world. These were cultures in conflict that resulted in backward and negative development. For our positive socio-economic development in the visual Arts in Nigeria, more of our Art administrators/managers should be trained to champion the act of art production, promotion, planning, organizing and propagation of visual art practices in Nigeria.

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